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# THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

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No. 9.

DUBLIN, JUNE 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

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## NOTICE.

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Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

AN Executive notice has come to hand from which I learn that the Judicial Committee which is to deal with "certain accusations 'with reference to certain letters, and in the alleged writings of the Mahatmas' injurious to the character of W. Q. Judge, Vice-President of the T.S.," will meet in London on 27th prox., and that Colonel Olcott will be present. A fortnight afterwards the Fourth Annual Convention of the European Section of the T.S. will be held. This seems a most satisfactory arrangement, as the "charges" above referred to will have been investigated, and the work of Convention proceed without interruption.

At such a juncture it is well that we should have confidence in the out-heads of the movement. Colonel Olcott and W. Q. Judge are entitled to this, by reason of their years of service and devotion to the T.S.; and of Annie Besant we know that the highest and purest motives have been the mainspring of all her actions before and after joining the T.S. We are pledged to brotherhood; it is sufficient to remember this, and act up to our pledges. Let us think kindly, firmly, strongly, to each in the true spirit of loyalty. The Elder Brothers—whom some know to exist, and in whom others believe—look on with unceasing watchfulness over the T.S. as an entity which they have created for the service of humanity. Whether we regard them as "facts" or "ideals," they should inspire us to higher service, purer love, more untiring devotion. Obligated to become radicals, protestants against every circumscribed form which dwarfs the conception of man as a divine being, and the realization of life which that conception implies—our radicalism is not incompatible with loyalty—loyalty to what we conceive to be true; loyalty to those whom we believe to be the custodians and exponents of truth.

The "keynote" of the N. of E. Federation Quarterly Meeting, a report of which we gave in last issue, seems to have been "Unity." No watchword could be more appropriate at the present time. As we near the close of the century, the very nature of the forces at work tend to accentuate differences, and hinder the realization of unity. The conflict of interest against interest, class against class, sect against sect, is naturally intensified as the struggle proceeds. What can be said, from the individualist point of view, has been said, and men are gradually coming to the conclusion that its justification and righteousness is of form merely, not of fact.

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This desire for unity is world-wide; it is the significance of the hour. It shows of what seed we are. Men touch the ideal in their dreams, and awaken but slowly to its reality.

All the Gospels of the ages,  
Since the human round began,  
Re-appear in living pages,  
Scriptured to the social man.

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The first object of the T.S. is based on the essential unity of all existence, and so every member of the T.S. stands pledged to this principle. In almost every land, societies, unions, federations, &c., are being formed to help in bringing about some practical realization of this fundamental truth. Without forming any "social wing," or any new section, the attitude of every member of the T. S. who fulfils his pledge, is necessarily one of kindly sympathy and good feeling towards all. What a wonderful bond is sympathy. It unites us to all. It awakens a similar feeling—a synchronous vibration—in the hearts of those with whom we are brought in contact, and establishes a medium through which soul touches soul. In its human atmosphere, the sense of separateness fades, and in the clear light we read the old-new truth written on the tablets of the heart. "The only ultimate good is unity, and in reality nothing else exists."

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I wish to emphasise what I have already said, that the T.S. is united with every organization, religious or social, striving towards a realization of unity, however widely different their ways and means. What is orthodoxy or heterodoxy but the gleam of the same bubble on its opposite sides? Mankind, imbued with the spirit of brotherhood, will outgrow both. Engrossed in material things; crusted over, within and without; with "no loophole for darts of the stars," little wonder men have given themselves over to that false gospel of despair which "sets its morality in private gain, and shuns the common care." Let us then, have that Liberty which means the effacement of every barrier that interposes between the common man and the achievement of a common destiny.

Wake the lyres to break the slumbers—  
So Pythagorus well said;  
"By the charm of tones in numbers  
The starred universe is led."

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I am indebted to the *Northern Theosophist* for a few notes on Mrs. Besant's lecture on "How Indians Search for the Soul," and to the *Pacific Theosophist* for the extract from one of the speeches of the Countess Wachtmeister at the

American Convention. I thought both would be of interest to a large number of our readers who do not see these magazines. I have also to acknowledge another 5s. for the *I.T.* Fund from the same anonymous friend.

The IRISH THEOSOPHIST sends greeting to all who will be assembled in Convention in July. It has no vote; but, as Bro. Judge said at last Convention, "it is not a vote which tells in our movement; it is energy, work, work, work." It hopes to have its share of this.

### MRS. BESANT ON MEDITATION.

NOTES FROM A LECTURE AT HARROGATE ON "HOW INDIANS SEARCH FOR THE SOUL."

WE all find that meditation helps right conclusion in any matters that come before us. In our ordinary every-day affairs, if any difficulty arises, the best way to solve it is to retire from disturbing influences and quietly study it out. Raja Yoga makes this a possibility for its students by teaching them how to meditate by training these powers of concentration until they are able to abstract their thoughts from all surroundings and retire into themselves even when amongst others. To do this requires steady, patient effort. The first step is to cease from all wicked ways and thoughts, and practice a stern morality, so as to become a nobly moral character. Ordinary untrained persons are destitute of the power of concentrating thought and keeping it sternly to the line desired.

We are too desultory, too paragrahy, as is shewn in our modern Western literature. How many of our Western young men or women are capable of pursuing a line of argument right through to its conclusion? We are so in the habit of taking information in small disjointed bits, swallowing it without mastication or digestion, that very few of us can keep our minds sufficiently under control to really think a thing out for ourselves. A common Eastern simile is to liken the human being to a chariot and horses. The body is the chariot. The passions and desires are the horses. The soul is the driver; the mind and thoughts are the reins. An untrained Western is like a chariot whose driver carries the reins loosely and does not control the horses, allowing them to go as they will and where they will. But a Raja Yoga is like a chariot driven by a wise and strong driver who controls the horses, making them obey his wishes.

In order to pursue Raja Yoga we must first practice good and truth. A common method is to begin by meditating for say ten minutes on first rising in the morning on truth, and then keeping the whole action of the day closely to the ideal thus evolved. Analysis of all failures and stern determination to avoid them in future has to be steadily practised until the pupil has gradually obtained power over his thoughts and actions so as to keep his conduct in the exact line that his highest ideals direct. This is not done in a casual way, but of set purpose.

The second stage is concentration of mind apart from the senses. Here we fritter away our powers, careless of the fact that our capacities and opportunities are limited. We are never content to think, we always wish to be doing something, and so waste our time and our minds in doing what is not worth doing.

Far better to do nothing than to wilfully waste one's mind in reading trash. The mind requires rest at times, and for some, light reading forms a suitable form of rest for the mind when it has been actively engaged on other and weightier matters. But I think there are very few who would not soon find, if they tried it, that it was better to look into yourself and think instead of frittering away time and intelligence on what requires no thought, and is not good in itself. The third stage of the Raja Yogi is when the soul can withdraw from the mind and get to consciousness above all reason. Then desires cease, not by killing out the below, but by controlling it, by out-growing the lower desires. Then he feels he is one with the All—he desires nothing for self, but everything for all others, and so helps others,—*Harrogate Herald*.

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## A STRANGE AWAKENING.

By Æ.

### CHAPTER IV.

LITTLE heaps of paper activities piled themselves up, were added to, diminished, and added to again, all the day long before Harvey at his desk. He had returned to his work: there was an unusual press of business, and night after night he was detained long beyond the usual hours. The iron hand which he had foreseen was laid upon him: it robbed him even of his right to sorrow, the time to grieve. But within him at moments stirred memories of the past, poignant anguish and fierce rebellion. With him everything transformed itself finally into ideal images and aspects, and it was not so much the memory of an incident which stung him as the elemental sense of pain in life itself. He felt that he was debarred from a heritage of spiritual life which he could not define even to himself. The rare rays of light that slanted through the dusty air of the office, mystic gold fallen through inconceivable distances from the pure primeval places, wakened in him an unutterable longing: he felt a choking in his throat as he looked. Often, at night, too, lifting his tired eyes from the pages flaring beneath the bright gas jet, he could see the blueness deepen rich with its ancient clouds of starry dust. What pain it was to him, Child of the Stars, to watch from that horrible prison-house, the face of all faces, immemorial quiet, passivity and peace, though over it a million tremors fled and chased each other throughout the shadowy night! What pain it was to let the eyes fall low and see about him the pale and feverish faces looking ghostly through the hot, fetid, animal, and flickering air!

His work over, out into the night he would drag himself wearily—out into the night anywhere; but there no more than within could he escape from that power which haunted him with mighty memories, the scourge which the Infinite wields. Nature has no refuge for those in whom the fire of spirit has been kindled: earth has no glory for which it does not know a greater glory. As Harvey passed down the long streets, twinkling with their myriad lights fading into blue and misty distances, there rose up before him in the visionary air solemn rows of sphinxes in serried array, and starlit pyramids and temples—greatness long dead, a dream that mocked the hives around him, hoarding the sad small generations of humanity dwindling away from beauty. Gone was the pure and pale splendour of the primeval skies and the lustre of the first-born

of stars. But even this memory, which linked him in imagination to the ideal past, was not always his: he was weighted, like all his race, with an animal consciousness which cried out fiercely for its proper life, which thirsted for sensation, and was full of lust and anger. The darkness was not only about him, but in him, and struggled there for mastery. It threw up forms of meanness and horrible temptations which clouded over his soul; their promise was forgetfulness; they seemed to say: "Satisfy us, and your infinite longing shall die away; to be of clay is very dull and comfortable; it is the common lot."

One night, filled with this intolerable pain, as he passed through the streets he yielded to the temptation to kill out this torturing consciousness: he accosted one of the women of the streets and walked away with her. She was full of light prattle, and chattered on and on. Harvey answered her not a word; he was set on his stony purpose. Child of the Stars! what had he to do with these things? He sought only his soul's annihilation. Something in this terrible silence communicated itself to his companion. She looked at his face in the light of a lamp; it was white, locked, and rigid. Child of the Stars, no less, though long forgetful, she shuddered at this association. She recoiled from him crying out "You brute—you brute!" and then fled away. The unhappy man turned homeward and sat in his lonely room with stupid, staring eyes, fixed on darkness and vacancy until the pale green light of dawn began to creep in upon him.

Into this fevered and anguished existence no light had yet come. Drunken with wretchedness, Harvey could not or would not think; and the implacable spirit which followed him deepened and quickened still more the current of his being, and the GLOOM and the GLORY of his dream moved still nearer to each other. Mighty and mysterious spirit, thou who crownest pain with beauty, and by whom the mighty are bowed down from their seats, under thy guidance, for such a crowning and for such agony, were coiled together the living streams of evil and good, so that at last the man might know himself—the soul—not as other than Thee!

The ways by which he was brought to that moment were unremembered; the sensations and thoughts and moods which culminated in the fire of self-consciousness could be retraced but vaguely. He had gone out of the city one Sunday, and lying down in the fields under the trees, for a time he grew forgetful of misery. He went once more into the world of dreams. He, or the creature of his imagination, some shadow of himself, lived in and roamed through antique forests where the wonderful days were unbroken by sense of sorrow. Childhood shared in an all-pervading exultation; through the pulses of youth ran the fiery energy that quickened the world; and this shadow of the dreamer dwelling amid the forests grew gradually into a consciousness of a fiery life upon which the surface forms were but films: he entered this kingdom of fire; its life became his life; he knew the secret ways to the sun, and the sunny secrets living in the golden world. "It was I, myself," rushed into Harvey's mind: "It was I. Ah, how long ago!" Then for the first time, his visions dreams and imaginations became real to him, as memories of a spirit travelling through time and space. Looking backwards, he could nowhere find in the small and commonplace surroundings of his life anything which could have suggested or given birth to these vivid pictures and ideas. They began to move about swiftly in his mind and arrange themselves in order. He seemed to himself to have fallen downwards through a long series of lines of ever-lessening beauty—fallen downwards from the mansions of eternity into this truckling and hideous

life. As Harvey walked homewards through the streets, some power must have guided his steps, for he saw or knew nothing of what was about him. With the sense of the reality of his imaginations came an energy he had never before felt: his soul took complete possession of him: he knew, though degraded, that he was a spirit. Then, in that supreme moment, gathered about him the memories of light and darkness, and they became the lips through which eternal powers spake to him in a tongue unlike the speech of men. The spirit of light was behind the visions of mystical beauty: the spirit of darkness arrayed itself in the desires of clay. These powers began to war within him: he heard voices as of Titans talking.

The spirit of light spake within him and said—"Arouse now, and be thou my voice in this dead land. There are many things to be spoken and sung—of dead language the music and significance, old world philosophies; you will be the singer of the sweetest songs; stories wilder and stranger than any yet will I tell you—deeds forgotten of the vaporous and dreamy prime.

The voice came yet again closer, full of sweet promise, with magical utterance floating around him. He became old—inconceivably old and young together. He was astonished in the wonders of the primal world. Chaos with tremendous agencies, serpentine powers, strange men-beasts and men-birds, the crude first thoughts of awakening nature was before him; from inconceivable heights of starlike purity he surveyed it; he went forth from glory; he descended and did battle; he warred with behemoth, with the flying serpents and the monstrous creeping things. With the Lords of Air he descended and conquered; he dwelt in a new land, a world of light, where all things were of light, where the trees put forth leaves of living green, where the rose would blossom into a rose of light and the lily into a white radiance, and over the vast of gleaming plains and through the depths of luminous forests, the dreaming rivers would roll in liquid and silver flame. Often he joined in the mad dance upon the highlands, whirling round and round until the dark grass awoke fiery with rings of green under the feet. And so, on and on through endless transformations he passed, and he saw how the first world of dark elements crept in upon the world of beauty, clothing it around with grossness and veiling its fires; and the dark spirits entered by subtle ways into the spheres of the spirits of light, and became as a mist over memory and a chain upon speed; the earth groaned with the anguish. Then this voice cried within him—"Come forth; come out of it; come out, oh king, to the ancestral spheres, to the untroubled spiritual life. Out of the furnace, for it leaves you dust. Come away, oh king, to old dominion and celestial sway; come out to the antique glory!"

Then another voice from below laughed at the madness. Full of scorn it spake, "You, born of clay, a ruler of stars! Pitiful toiler with the pen, feeble and weary body, what shall make of you a spirit?" Harvey thrust away this hateful voice. From his soul came the impulse to go to other lands, to wander for ever and ever under the star-rich skies, to be a watcher of the dawn and eve, to live in forest places or on sun-nurtured plains, to merge himself once more in the fiery soul hidden within. But the mocking voice would not be stifled, showing him how absurd and ridiculous it was "to become a vagabond," so the voice said, and finally to die in the workhouse. So the eternal spirit in him, God's essence, conscious of its past brotherhood, with the morning stars, the White Æons, in its prisonhouse writhed with the meanness, till at last he cried, "I will struggle no longer; it is only agony of spirit to aspire here at all; I will sit and wait till the deep darkness has vanished."

But the instruction was not yet complete; he had learned the primal place

of spirit; he had yet to learn its nature. He began to think with strange sadness over the hopes of the world, the young children. He saw them in his vision grow up, bear the burden in silence or ignorance; he saw how they joined in dragging onward that huge sphinx which men call civilization; there was no time for loitering amid the beautiful, for if one paused it was but to be trampled by the feet of the many who could not stay or rest, and the wheels of the image ground that soul into nothingness. He felt every pain almost in an anguish of sympathy. Helpless to aid, to his lips came that cry to another which immemorial usage has made intuitive in men. But It is high and calm above all appeal; to It the cries from all the sorrowing stars sound but as one great music; lying in the infinite fields of heaven, from the united feelings of many universes It draws only a vast and passionless knowledge, without distinction of pleasure or pain. From the universal which moves not and aids not, Harvey in his agony turned away. He himself could fly from the struggle; thinking of what far place or state to find peace, he found it true in his own being that nowhere could the soul find rest while there was still pain or misery in the world. He could imagine no place or state where these cries of pain would not reach him; he could imagine no heaven where the sad memory would not haunt him and burn him. He knew then that the nature of the soul was love eternal; he knew that if he fled away a divine compassion would compel him to renew his brotherhood with the stricken and suffering; and what was best forever to do was to fight out the fight in the darkness. There was a long silence in Harvey's soul; then with almost a solemn joy he grew to realize at last the truth of he himself—the soul. The fight was over; the GLOOM and the GLORY were linked together, and one inseparably. Harvey was full of a sense of quietness, as if a dew fell from unseen places on him with soothing and healing power. He looked around. He was at the door of his lodgings. The tall narrow houses with their dull red hues rose up about him; from their chimneys went up still higher the dark smoke; but behind its nebulous wavering the stars were yet; they broke through the smoke with white lustre. Harvey looked at them for a moment, and went in strangely comforted.

THE END.

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### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.\*

THE Theosophical Society was organized in the last century by Count St. Germain, Cagliostro and others. At that time there was a powerful Lodge in Paris, one also in Denmark, another in Germany, and three in Italy. But the revolution of '93 came and swept all away. And that is one reason why we now, in this century, have such a terrible Karma to work out. That organization was the physical basis of the Society, which is really, in itself, an entity, formed by all the members who belong to it. The Theosophical Society has its seven Principles, and has to work through all of these. In the last century it worked through the physical basis, and now, in this century, it has had to work through Karma, or through the psychic state. We are now, happily, I think, emerging from that state, and hereafter we may hope to enter upon a condition of very great activity.

\* An address given before the 8th Annual Convention of the American Section, by the Countess Wachtmeister.

In 1851, in this century, Madame H. P. Blavatsky went to London with her father to take lessons in music, in which she manifested great talent. One day, while walking in the street, she saw coming towards her some Indian Princes, and, amongst these, a very fine looking Indian—a man of seven feet high—and to her great surprise, recognized in this man one whom she had always looked upon as her guardian angel. Ever since childhood she had seen him, and in moments of trial he had helped her. She had great love and affection for this person, and when she saw him in the physical form in London, she wanted to rush up to him and tell him how delighted she was to see him. But he made a sign to her to move on, and she went home and told her father, and all that night was unable to sleep, thinking of this strange thing—of how she had met her guardian angel. The next day, she went to Hyde Park, and while there this man came again to her, and said it was true that he had watched her from childhood, because he saw in her a good instrument for the formation of this Society. He said it was on account, first of all, of her psychical power, for she had been a medium. Secondly, on account of her great intellectual and mental powers, and because of her partly Eastern and partly Western birth, as, he said, she would have to work in all countries. Then he told her he had this work given to him to do by those above him, and that therefore he was most anxious that she should accept this position he offered her, which was to form this Society. He told her to go home to her father, consult with him, and then, if she would undertake this work, to return in three days to the Park and tell him. He pointed out to her that it would be a position of great trial, that she would be persecuted, and told her many things which would happen to the Society, and to herself. She went home, consulted with her father, who said she might do as she pleased, and that if she chose to take up the work, he himself would give her money and help her; but she was to decide for herself. After three days' cogitation, she decided to accept this position offered her, and she returned to the Park and told this to her Master. He then said she must go to Egypt, and that there she would have to stop for some time to be taught, so that she might be enabled to teach others. Then she went to India, and was taken, hidden in a hay cart, through a country where no European is ever permitted to pass. She lay in the cart, covered with hay, and was conducted safely through that part of the country by Indians. At last she reached the place where the Masters live, was received by the sister of one of Them, and lived in the Master's house for three years.

But these three years were years of very great trial. In the first place, she was taught how to use her will. She had to do lessons just like a child; had to get up early and work hard and learn mental lessons. At the end of three years she was told to go to Egypt, and there was placed under the charge of another Master, who taught her about the Book of the Dead and many other works. After that she was put in charge of a Jewish Rabbi and taught the Kabbala. When she had passed through all these, she was told she was ready, and should go to America, and that when she reached here, she would meet a man named Olcott, who was to be President of the Theosophical Society. She came to America, and I know people who have told me it was a standing joke against her when she came, because whenever she met anyone she would ask: "Do you know anybody by the name of Olcott?" "Do you know a man called Olcott?" They would say, no, they had never heard of such a person. But at last some one said, Yes, they had heard that Col. Olcott was with the Eddy Brothers, studying Spiritualism, and if Madame Blavatsky would go there she could meet him. An hour later she was on the train which conducted her



to the Eddy homestead, and there met Col. Olcott. She was quickly able to prove to him that all the phenomena witnessed at the Homestead, she could produce by will-power. She was able to tell him beforehand just what she was going to do. She was also able to duplicate any particular kind of phenomenon produced by the Eddy Brothers in a state of unconsciousness and passiveness, by mere will-power and in full possession of her own consciousness.

Some time passed, and then she, with Col. Olcott and William Q. Judge, formed the nucleus of the Society, and Col. Olcott consented to become its President. Some time afterwards they went to India, and there established the Society. Such was the beginning of this grand movement. At first but two or three meeting together in a drawing-room; then growing larger and larger, until it is what you now see it—a huge Society, with branches all over the face of the earth—in every country of the world. We have members belonging to all nationalities and to every religion of the world. And all these people call themselves brothers; and this Theosophical Society is one vast brotherhood extending all over the globe. And it is a brotherhood not only in name, but in reality; for I, who have travelled in so many countries, can tell you that wherever I go I am received as a sister. In India, among the Hindus, I have been received as a sister, taken into their homes (where they are not accustomed to take strangers or Europeans at any time), and I have not only been treated as a sister, but as a much-loved sister. And now I come over here to the opposite end of the world, and all receive me kindly; and wherever I travel, I feel I am welcome. This is a beautiful thought—to think we have created in the world such a brotherhood as this. I will not insist that it is a real brotherhood, but it is a nucleus which, as time goes on, will, I hope, become a real brotherhood.

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## A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

(FROM A PAPER READ AT THE DUBLIN LODGE BY J. DUNCAN.)

EVERY thinking man is confronted at some period of his life with the problem: "What am I here for—what purpose, if any, does my life attempt to fulfil?" This question would seem to arise naturally in the human mind in the very earliest stage of introspection, and it is perhaps fair to assume that all the religions and systems of philosophy which the world has seen owed their existence to an attempt to furnish an answer to this, the supreme riddle of life. For what object can religion or philosophy serve except to give us a justification for our existence, a *raison d'être*, a basis upon which to ground our right to thought and action. And as long as a religious or philosophical system continues to supply the needs of humanity—or even of a considerable section of humanity—in the direction which I have indicated, just so long will that system justify its own existence, and have a right to live.

The various religions with which the world is filled at the present day are therefore the product of a spiritual and intellectual evolution in the human mind, and have served, and to some extent continue to serve, a definite purpose. They have attempted to satisfy a want, a desire, an aspiration after spiritual things which has ever been present in humanity as far back as it can be traced.

But the mind of man has expanded, his needs have grown with the ages, and the narrow limits of creeds and dogmas become every day more and more intolerable to the free soul, which feels its strength and clearness of vision growing with every sunrise. "Away with beliefs," we cry; "give us

knowledge. We want no more dogma ; let us have experience." And, seeking that experience, we go out into the life of the world, we mingle with our fellows, we taste the sensations which have been the portion of myriads of our race before us. And here a notable phenomenon awaits the man who can regard himself, as it were, experimentally—who can investigate his own thoughts and feelings with the calm eye of an outside observer.

Let us suppose that he enters upon life with the distinct purpose of getting the greatest possible amount of personal satisfaction out of it. With this end in view he cultivates to the fullest possible extent every appreciative faculty he possesses, the sense of beauty, of harmony, of form, of colour, of sound—all that can give him the power of feeling to the full every delicate shade of enjoyment that can be drawn out of every passing moment of time. Surely it may be said that such an one has reached the summit of human happiness. Is not his every desire satisfied? His ideal realised? Alas, no! The moment of attainment is also the moment of satiation, and his cloyed faculties ever crave fresh sensations. But, where are the fresh sensations to come from? Has he not run through the whole gamut of human enjoyment? Has he not, like Alexander, conquered all the world, so that there is no more to conquer? While pausing to consider his life, its purpose, its current, its apparent failure, it may be that a recollection strikes him of a sense of keener delight, of more complete satisfaction with life than has ever come to him through his æsthetic methods. On looking back over his past to trace the occasion of this feeling he finds that it has come to him at times when he has rendered some service, done some sympathetic act to one of his fellow-travellers on the voyage of life. This sense of happiness has come to him unsought, spontaneously, the result of some chance action not done in accordance with his theory of life, but rather in spite of it. He remembers, perhaps, one or two such acts, and recalls with some surprise his own feeling at the time. He recollects that, so far from expecting thanks from the person he has served, he has experienced an extraordinary sense of gratitude to that person—gratitude for the wonderful glow of sympathy, which has filled his own soul at the time, and rendered the whole universe beautiful and harmonious.

Now, surely here is something which needs to be accounted for ; something utterly at variance with all our experimentalist's preconceived theories of life. To the trained mind, obviously the next step must be to seek for some law or fact in nature behind this phenomenon—at any rate for some hypothesis which will furnish a reasonable theory on which to account for it. And the inevitable conclusion to which he is forced is, that between all human souls there is distinct actual connection, so that all that we do for humanity is done also for ourselves, and what we do for ourselves to the exclusion of our fellows, fails even of its own object. We cannot, therefore, if we would, be independent of, or separate from our fellow-beings ; an eternal bond unites us to them ; our fate, for good or ill, is bound up with that of the race.

We have now got the length of enunciating a natural law which will, at any rate, go far towards furnishing us with a basis on which to found our actions and attitude of mind—the law of solidarity.

Having experimentally verified this truth, it is, perhaps, natural to look around at the religious and philosophical systems which surround us, and enquire if any of them can supply us with a corroboration of our own experience in the form of a distinct statement of the truth we have discovered.

Roman Catholicism offers us salvation through the Church, enjoining on us strict obedience to her prescribed forms, and the absolute acceptance of her formulated dogmas.

Orthodox Protestant Theology offers us redemption through the substitution of Jesus Christ, asserting that faith in this substitution saves us from the frightful hell with which all Christian churches have for ages terrified their adherents. But in neither of these creeds, as now taught, do we find the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood clearly set forth; on the contrary, both postulate the possibility of the eternal happiness of some, co-existent with the eternal misery of others.

And, if we turn to the philosophy of negation, Materialism, do we find our needs satisfied? I think not. We do, indeed, find a high ethical ideal among most Materialists, but without any reason given. For, indeed, the distinguishing characteristic of Materialism would appear to be a deep-rooted objection to looking for the reason of anything,

But let us turn our eyes towards the East—the source of light—the ancient birth-place of religion. Here at last we find in the teachings of the sages, who have been the custodians of mystic truth from time immemorial, a clearly set forth doctrine which corresponds with our own experience. Here we learn that each soul is a ray of the divine light, an emanation from the uncreated spirit, and is therefore eternally united with its source. Hence the connection between ourselves and our race is absolute, indestructible, ever-persistent, so that we cannot truly help ourselves except by service done to humanity.

The true philosophy of life then, is the philosophy of service—of service rendered not so much with the feeling of altruism, which implies separation, but because we recognise that we are one and indivisible—an integral part of the Universal Spirit. For the thinker, the philosopher, the occultist, there can be no truer motto than the simple one “I serve.”

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#### GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

\* \* All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged and appear under this heading.  
Subject for June—“*The Potency of Sound*” (continued).

##### THE POTENCY OF SOUND.

NOW we may consider that there is pervading the whole universe a single homogeneous resonance, sound, or tone, which acts, so to speak, as the awakener or vivifying power, stirring all the molecules into action. This is the word, the *verbum*, the *Logos* of St. John, who says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” This is creation, for without this resonance or motion among the quiescent particles, there would be no visible universe. That is to say, upon sound, or, as the Aryans called it, *Nada Brahma* (divine resonance), depends the evolution of the visible from the invisible. *Hadji-Erinn. The “Path.” April, 1886.*

Since, then, the homogeneous tone acts upon all the molecules of creation, may not this singing resonance cause such a transformation of brain energy as to vivify or awaken it, in time, to the True or Central Idea? We have seen that sound, so to speak, polarises certain particles of matter, attracting them to the earth, the great magnet from which they came. It confers upon other particles this same magnetic power as in the case of crystallisation; it awakens similar tones as when several untouched harps vibrate in harmony when the musical key-note is struck upon one alone. Why, then, may not the thought awakened by a fixed musical sound be in time attracted to the real source of that sound, of all sound? And as thought causes a disturbance among the molecules of the brain, some sound, however aerial, must accompany this vibration: does not my

brain then answer this singing resonance with the note homogeneous to all the ethereal space.—*Julius. The "Path," August, 1886.*

Mantrika-Sakti is the force or power of letters, speech, or music. The power of the ineffable name is the crown of this Sakti. *Sabba Row. Five Years of Theosophy.*

Om or Aum. A mystic syllable, the most solemn of all words in India. It is "an invocation, a benediction, an affirmation, and a promise"; and it is so sacred as to be indeed *the word at low breath* of occult, primitive masonry. No one must be near when this syllable is pronounced for a purpose. It is a compound of three letters—*a, u, m*, which, in the popular belief, are typical of the three Vedas, also of three Gods—A (Agni), V (Varunna), and M (Maruts), or Fire, Water, and Air. In Esoteric Philosophy these are the three sacred fires, or the "triple fire" in the universe and man. Occultly, this "triple fire" represents the highest *Tetraktys* also.—*H.P.B. Glossary.*

In the Sanskrit, as also in the Hebrew and all other alphabets, every letter has its occult meaning and its rationale; it is a cause, and an effect of a preceding cause, and a combination of these very often produces the most magical effects. The vowels, especially, contain the most occult and formidable potencies.—*Secret Doctrine. Vol. I., '94.*

This word (Om), when properly pronounced, produces a certain regulation of the breathing process. The constant repetition of this word has the effect of tranquilizing the mind, and thereby restraining the force of the passions. In incantations, sound is so modulated as to produce the same state of the body as that which invariably accompanies the generation of any desired psychic or spiritual force.—*Man, page 101.*

Never receive and pass onward a thought which you do not feel and understand. On this point accept no authority other than your own soul. It is better that you seem to lose a ray of truth than to accept and deflect it by a want of understanding, a want of assimilation of it. If it be yours in the law, you cannot lose it. It will be sent to you again and again until you do receive it. Take, then, what your nature selects until you reach a point where you can rise above nature. When this is reached you will not need to read any longer, except from the wonderful book of life, and from those Blessed Scriptures wherein the Divine has spoken to the ages through men who had attained to some share in His being.—*Jasper Niemand, F.T.S. "Path," June, 1888.*

Begin the work of thought for the good of others by first forgetting self; as fast as possible get away from the dominion of Materiality. Live in the love of doing *enduring* good to others—these conditions *are* the true and upward advancement of ourselves. The doing of these things *is the reward*—it is the advancing into *God-life*. It is part of our real Eternal selves. It is living in the Eternal—the everlasting good; for the *God-life*—the good life is the only eternally active one. By living thus, the gross and material now enchaining our entities will be broken down, and will die and leave us—and die they must, sooner or later, or the "I am I" shall perish.—*H.N.H., F.T.S. "Path," Feb., 1887.*

(To be Continued.)

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## PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

(LOTUS CIRCLE PAPER.)

THE foundation of Practical Theosophy is Brotherhood, and the foundation of Brotherhood is the realization of the unity of mankind—nay, more than

that, the unity of the whole universe. All is but an expression, an outbreathing of the Divine Life, the Universal Spirit; therefore, in essence all is one, and when all experience has been gained, all will again unite and become one in fact. It is one aim of Theosophy to hasten the time when all shall be one; and as the oneness must be brought about on all planes and in all things, so there is an infinite number of aspects to Practical Theosophy, an infinite number of directions in which it may work.

Two of the most important of these directions are the home and our treatment of animals. For we cannot immediately attain to the love for Humanity which will express itself in Universal Brotherhood. As Confucius says:—“Above all men to love his father and his mother is his (man’s) main and principal duty, from the practice of which he afterwards proceeds as by degrees to the practice of that universal love, whose object is all mankind.” And so to reach universal brotherhood we must begin by brotherhood in our own homes. This seems a very commonplace thing, one which it is quite unnecessary to mention; for it is surely easy to be brotherly to our own relatives—surely very few, if any, fail in that. And yet, when we come to think of it, there are some ways in which we do not always reach the perfect ideal of Brotherhood set before us by all the greatest teachers. We do sometimes find fault with those over whom we have control, not so much because we are anxious to correct the wrong, and by pointing out their mistakes help them to overcome them, as because these same mistakes irritate us, and it is a relief to our own injured feelings to inflict punishment for them; and our motive being thus impure and wrong, the way in which the punishment is inflicted is likely to aggravate the evil rather than correct it. We should not do this if we recognised the oneness of all, and the responsibility that rests upon us of acting always in the way that will best develop the higher nature of those “other selves” that have been entrusted to us.

And towards those over whom we have no control, we are not always brotherly. Is there not in many homes one, it may be the mother, or the eldest sister, who is so unselfish and so ready always to work for others, that all the burden and responsibility is left on her; and, if there is anything unpleasant to be done, it is taken for granted that she will do it, for she “will not mind.” This is not brotherly. If we fully recognised our oneness, we should try all to share equally the burdens, responsibilities, and troubles of the home.

These points affect chiefly the elder members of the home; but there are many ways in which the children, even the very little ones, can help to spread the spirit of Brotherhood. By yielding to their elders that ready and willing obedience which springs from confidence and love; by showing towards their playmates that unselfishness which will prompt them to share all their toys and sweetmeats, instead of quarrelling over them, and being angry because one seems to have a little more than another; by helping each other, the older and stronger taking care of the younger and weaker, instead of tyrannising over them. By trying always to say and do what will best please those dear to them rather than what will please themselves, they, too, will do their share, and it will not be a small one, towards bringing about that “Heaven on earth,” which is within the reach of us all, if only we will take the trouble to win it.

And it is by all these little actions, by cultivating the spirit of brotherly love in our ordinary, everyday life, that we shall best purify our own natures, and fit ourselves for doing afterwards a wider work for all humanity. And, even though it may not be our privilege to have any great work to do, we shall at least create around ourselves a pure atmosphere of good thoughts and

good actions, that will radiate from us, and help to purify this broader atmosphere of humanity.

But while we may remember that all other men and women are our brothers and sisters, we are apt to forget that there is also a bond connecting us with the animals. For they are animated by the same life which pulsates in us, and though they are now on a far lower plane than we, yet they also are on the upward path of evolution, and in the course of long ages they, too, will become human. They have not yet reached the stage when they can consciously hasten their own progress as we can do ours. They, like us, are subject to the law of Karma, but, unlike us, they are unable to modify its effects—they are powerless in its grasp. It is we that have the power, by our treatment of them, to hasten or retard their development. The master who manages his dog or his horse by love, not by fear, develops in him those higher instincts which verge on the human, and so prepares him to rise in the scale of evolution; while he who treats his animals cruelly, only intensifies the brute element in them, so thrusting them lower in the scale and retarding their progress. When we see the overloaded cart-horse, or omnibus-horse, urged on by a cruel driver to do work for which he is really unfit, we should remember not only that such a driver is adding to the burden of pain and oppression that is weighing down our dumb brethren, but also that all those who are a party to the cruelty by allowing, or too often actually insisting on the overloading, are participators in his sin, and may be more guilty than he.

Another question that is suggested by this thought of the bond between ourselves and the animals is: to what extent are we justified in taking their life? Is it, or is it not, in accordance with the law of Brotherhood that animals should be slain to supply us with food? Or, to carry it still further, are we, or are we not justified in killing a spider or a fly that we imagine to be in our way, or even in killing a gnat to avoid a momentary slight pain or inconvenience to ourselves? A Buddhist would not hesitate to answer these questions; nor would most of our modern christians, but their answer would probably differ from that of the Buddhist.

If we would not only show in our own conduct, but also cultivate in our children, that tender regard for others which would make us shrink from inflicting pain of any kind on even the least of our brethren, whether human or only animal, we should then be doing much towards helping on the work of those great teachers—our masters and leaders—who have devoted their lives to spreading peace and love amongst mankind, and so we, too, should help in leading humanity on to that day of perfect rest, perfect light, and perfect love, when we shall all be one with the eternal.

LILIAN EDGER, F.T.S.

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#### NOTES ABOUT BOOKS.

THE London Lodge of the Theosophical Society have recently published two further numbers of their Transactions. The first of these is entitled "Masters of Wisdom," by Bertram Keightley, with some additional passages by Mr. A. P. Sinnett. This number is a most interesting one, and contains some new and important statements.

The second of the new Transactions is—"Vehicles of Consciousness," by

W. Scott Elliot. It treats of the various vehicles in which the consciousness of man can function on the different planes of nature. The writer says that his statements are no mere speculations but have been obtained from those who can at will function on both the Astral and Devachanic planes. And that this information has been checked by those who have developed similar faculties. The price of the Transactions is 1s. 1d. each, post free.

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The most recent publication of the *Theosophist* Office is "The Book of the Path of Virtue" or a Version of the Tao-Teh-King, of Lao-Tze, the Chinese Mystic and Philosopher; with an introduction and essay on the Tao as presented in the writings of Chuang-Tze, the Apostle of Tao Tze, by Walter R. Old. This little work is largely Ethical, and will, we feel, be welcomed by a large circle of readers. The price is 1s.

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Any addition to that well-known series, "The Sacred Books of the East" is sure to be well received. The latest volume, now before us, is a very important one, and consists of translations into English of some of the most famous of the Mahâyâna treatises. The volume opens with a translation from the Sanskrit, by E. B. Cowell, of the Buddha-Karita, of Asvaghosha, an early Sanskrit poem on the legendary history of Buddha, containing much interesting matter concerning the early history of Buddhism. Among the other Sutras here translated we may mention, as well worth studying, the larger and the smaller Sukhâvatî-Vyûha, the Vagrakkhedikâ or Diamond-Cutter. This Sutra is very popular in Japan, and is one of the most highly valued metaphysical treatises in Buddhist Literature. The volume concludes with translations of the larger and the smaller Pragnâ-Pâramitâ-Hridaya, Sûtras, and of the Amitâyur-Dhyâna, Sutra. The price of this volume is 12s. 6d., and to students of the Mahâyâna doctrines no more useful book is obtainable.

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In March last, Professor Max Müller delivered a series of three lectures at the Royal Institution on the Vedânta Philosophy. These lectures have now been issued in book form. The first lecture treats of the origin of the Vedânta Philosophy; the second of the Soul and God; the third of Similarities and Differences between Indian and European Philosophy. The lectures form a useful introduction to the study of the Vedânta Philosophy, but the student must carefully guard against a blind acceptance of the learned professor's views on not a few debatable points. In one place he states that there is no esoteric Vedânta School, and in another writes that "there is some truth" in the statement that there is such a school. Some day, perhaps, the Professor will find himself forced to admit that Indian Philosophies have their esoteric as well as exoteric schools. The price is 5s.

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"Lux Naturæ: Nerve System of the Universe." A new demonstration of an old law, by David Sinclair, is a curious little work on the lines of thought chiefly associated with Keely and his discoveries in vibratory forces. In this work these forces are discussed as relating more particularly to the mental and moral evolution of man. Price 3s 6d.

The Theosophical Publishing Society has just issued the third volume of The Collectanea Hermetica Series. It is entitled "A Short Enquiry Concerning the Hermetic Art," by a Lover of Philalethes. London, 1714. Preface by Non Omnis Moriar. An Introduction to Alchemy and Notes by S. S. D. D. Much of the present volume has reference to the Science of Alchemy in relation to human improvement. Price 2s. 6d. nett.

Many of our readers may be glad to hear that a new edition of Dr. Anderson's most useful work on "Reincarnation" is now on sale by the T.P.S.

Mrs. Besant's four lectures at the Adyar Convention on "Sound," "Fire," "Yoga," and "Symbolism" will very shortly be ready for publication. The price will be 2s. nett.

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### MAGIC.

*After reading the Upanishads.*

Out of the dusky chamber of the brain  
Flows the imperial Will through dream on dream ;  
The fires of life around it tempt and gleam ;  
The lights of earth behind it fade and wane.

Passed beyond beauty tempting dream on dream,  
The pure Will seeks the hearthold of the light ;  
Sounds the deep "om" the glorious word of might ;  
Forth from the hearthold breaks the living stream.

Passed out beyond the deep heart music-filled,  
The kingly Will sits on the ancient throne,  
Wielding the sceptre, fearless, free, alone,  
Knowing in Brahma all it dared and willed.

G.W.R.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The past Session was brought to a close on the 30th, as regards the public meetings, by a capital discussion on a brilliant essay by Mr. Norman, entitled, "The Soul and the Senses in Relation to Experience."

The Midsummer Meeting of Members will be held on the 18th inst., at 8 p.m., when the election of Delegates to the July Convention, and other important business, will be dealt with. A full attendance of members is requested.

FRED. J. DICK, *Hon. Sec.*